

# THE MORAL ADVOCATE.

CONDUCTED BY ELISHA BATES.

*"On Earth peace, good will towards men"*

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*From the Richmond Enquirer.*

TO THE EDITORS.

Remarks on the Petition of the Quakers.

Your last paper states that "a petition from the religious society of friends praying relief from the laws imposing military requisitions, and penalties for non-compliance," has been laid before the General Assembly of Virginia. This subject but slightly affects the public interest, and therefore has engaged but a small share of attention. But it is most important to a part of the community: and though they may be few in number, & occupy an humble station in the commonwealth, I hope that on that account, an attempt to advocate their claim, will not be considered an unnecessary intrusion on the public. I know nothing of the contents of their petition, except from the concise notice in your paper, and my views for their relief, no doubt differ from those of that respectable society. I shall endeavour to show that this last remnant of religious persecution may be effaced from our code, the quakers relieved from the heaviest of their grievances, and at the same time, the strength of the state in men and money, increased, instead of being diminished, by removing some of the existing penalties.

The fines for non-attendance at musters for training will be first considered. It should be remembered, that these fines are not imposed for the purpose of aiding the revenue, but with the sole view of enforcing the performance of the preparatory part of military duty. In requiring a service from the quakers, which is contrary to their religious obligation or sectarian prejudices, (it is immaterial which,) the law is liable to the strong objection of being completely ineffectual. All the penalties which have been imposed, have not driven a single quaker to the muster ground, and if they were increased tenfold, they would be equally inefficient. The state never has, and never can receive the least service or benefit from this policy.

The legislature would, with one accord, disclaim the intention of subjecting quakers to muster fines as a measure of finance; it is therefore unnecessary to consider them as *taxes*, except as they bear on the quakers. Muster fines are fixed at the discretion of the courts martial, from 75 to 500 cents for each offence; which amounts from \$6 to \$12 a year, on each quaker, between 18 & 45 years of age. Even the least of these sums makes a heavy annual burden, when added to the taxes contributed in common with all other persons—and the evil is the greater, as most of those who are thus aggrieved are as conscientiously opposed to paying the fines voluntarily, as to performing the duty. The sheriff therefore for every year's fines, regularly seizes and sells their property: and such forced sales we know do not often command more than half the value of the article. After the sale is made, and the fine deducted from the amount received, there is still another loss to be sustained. The conscientious scruples of the quaker forbid him to receive the balance, and the sheriff is free to keep it, or dispose of it as he pleases.

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In this manner a loss of \$100 might be incurred for a single fine. But these penalties are so opposed to the spirit of the people, that as much lenity as the harshness of the law will allow, is exercised by the courts martial and sheriff. It may be said, that all these inflictions are caused by the folly and obstinacy of those who suffer them. This may possibly be true, without in the least supporting the correctness of our policy. Whether we attribute them to the piety, or delusion of the quakers—to their commendable firmness, or to their blind obstinacy—still experience fully proves that the cause cannot be removed by coercive measures: and if justice does not, at least humanity requires that some relief should be afforded by the legislature, from the ruinous consequences of this conflict between legal and religious obligations.

It is notorious that the requisition of drill duty from quakers, has always been as useless to the state, as hurtful to themselves. As nothing has been gained by subjecting them to the duty, so nothing could be lost by allowing them an exemption. The ready objection to this indulgence, will be to call it an exclusive privilege. Without stopping to contest the correctness of this application of the term, I merely observe, that a similar exemption has already been granted to others, for reasons which are no doubt good, but not better than those for exempting quakers. This society itself has been exempted by the state, from the general laws respecting legal oaths, and the ceremony of marriage. In these cases the legislature respected, and wisely yielded to, what they deemed, the prejudice of this sect, and by no improper act, have they shown themselves unworthy of the confidence and favor. Their exemption from militia duty, might properly be termed an exclusive privilege, if it rendered the lot of a quaker more desirable than that of other classes. No such expectation will be entertained. Their peculiar opinions oblige them to lead a life of labor, and of rigid self denial, which would not be borne except for conscience sake, even if this exemption added to their list of worldly enjoyments. We know too well their caution in admitting members, to fear the exemption being extended to any, who by the whole tenor of their lives, did not prove the sincerity of their professions, and the justice of their claim.

The requisition of military duty, (with the few exceptions noticed above,) is general, and therefore is considered equal and just. But the law does not bear equally, except on those in similar situations. The duty is light to all who have nothing to object, but the small share of bodily exertion necessary. But the mind of a quaker is so directed, or so warped, that it is as much out of his power to muster, as he who is exempted, by law, because he is blind or crippled. The penalties must continue to be imposed in vain; until his religion is altered or destroyed. Thus, pure as were the intentions of these penalties, they become, in fact, directed against the religious opinions of a particular sect: and even if the practical evils were not felt, and complained of, still, every friend of civil and religious liberty, should be unwilling to allow the semblance of persecution to deform our fair institution.

The foregoing remarks do not apply to actual field service. I do not recommend discharging a citizen from any real service which may be due to his country. But as it respects quakers, the requisition of service in war is even less effectual than that for drill duty, and as it renders not the least benefit to the state, is a measure of pure, gratuitous oppression. The present law, (if I am not mistaken, not having means of reference,) subjects all persons draughted for service, who do

not appear at the time and place of rendezvous, to a fine of \$96, and 12 months imprisonment. This did not obtain for the state a single quaker soldier during the late war; but it subjected every one of the military age, to at least one of these terms of imprisonment, and in the counties exposed to invasions, to two or three such terms. They could not conscientiously pay any portion of the fine, and therefore the alternative allowed by law, was to pack our whole quaker population in jails, and support them there 1, 2 or 3 years, at a greater expense, than under all the penalties of the law, would be derived from them in a hundred years. How this awkward business was avoided in other parts of the state I know not: but in my county, after the jail had been filled, according to law, the door was by some means left open on the first night, and with much difficulty, the prisoners were persuaded to walk out and return to their homes. It is probable that the extreme severity of the law, rendered it a dead letter every where. Laws are rarely enforced, when opposed to the spirit and opinions of the people, and a wise legislator will see the necessity of ending with conflicts, as soon as possible. Any law being continued on the statute book after it becomes totally disregarded, tends to diminish our habitual respect for all other laws. The penalties incurred for refusing to perform military duty during the war, were thus evaded; and together with the quakers, all other persons escaped, who had committed the same offence from much worse motives. Such persons will not forget this circumstance: and (if the punishment continues unaltered,) hereafter every bad citizen may refuse serving, expecting again to escape, by being put on the same footing with hundreds of respectable, because conscientious offenders. But even the prospect of a similar escape from punishment, cannot be very gratifying to men, who are noted for obedience to every law of their country, except that, which they believe to be in opposition to the laws of God.

Our present policy then obtains no service from this sect, either in peace or war; and as that is the sole object of coercive measures, it is difficult to find any motive for retaining them, or to conceive how they could be changed for the worse. I ask then, what possible loss the state could sustain by releasing them from drill duty, and commuting their personal services in time of war, into pecuniary service? The value of that which is claimed of them and totally lost, might be obtained by a reasonable percentage on their taxes. If the augmentation necessary for this purpose was skilfully blended with their present taxes, so that one could not easily be distinguished from the other, it is probable that every difficulty would be ended; and such modification of the law would relieve the quakers of their heaviest grievances, without relinquishing the least portion of the just claims, which the state has for the services of its citizens. If such a commutation would be attended with insuperable difficulties, I would prefer an entire release from military duties, to subjecting the quakers to the existing penalties, which cause so much evil to them, without approaching their intended effect, of securing service to the state.

#### TOLERATION.

### A DIALOGUE,

BETWEEN TELEMACIUS AND MENTOR,

On the Rights of Conscience and Military Requisitions.

*Telemachus.* MY object, Sir, in this visit, is to converse with

you on the subject of the petitions that have been preferred to our Legislature, in which individuals have requested an exemption from military duty, on the plea that their consciences forbid them to bear arms as soldiers. I have been not a little disgusted, that men, who do not even pretend to be Quakers, should prefer such petitions to disturb the public mind, and to excite suspicions of the equity of our excellent laws. The petitioners have hitherto failed in their attempts, but they will probably renew their petitions unless something can be done to give a check to such fanaticism and impertinence.

*Mentor.* I am happy in an opportunity to converse with you on the subject proposed. It is one of great importance; one which should be carefully examined and patiently discussed, aside from the influence of prejudice and party passions. I have a favorable opinion of the legislators of this state, and have no doubt of their disposition to allow their constituents those rights to which they are entitled by the Constitutions of our country. But on questions which have the whole weight of tradition and the opinion of a vast majority on one side, and on the other, little else than arguments which have seldom been impartially examined, we are not to expect an immediate decision in favour of a few individuals, however reasonable may be their request. In the case before us, whether the request be reasonable, or not, is certainly a question of magnitude, one in which the welfare of the state is deeply concerned. It ought therefore not to be dismissed with disdain, nor rashly decided.

In regard to the justice of the petition, I do not see much force in the remark, that the petitioners do not even pretend to be Quakers. Had they been Quakers they would have had no occasion to petition, because the exemption for which they plead, is already granted to that denomination; and though I respect the Quakers, I am of the opinion that other Christians may have *consciences* and *rights* as well as they; and that the consciences and rights of other Christians should be equally respected by the Legislature, and by every individual of the community. Men may agree with the Quakers on some points, while they disagree on others. Whether the opinion in which the petitioners agree with the Friends be correct or erroneous is not the main question. It is an opinion which many good and peaceable citizens conscientiously entertain; and if the opinion were universal, neither you nor any intelligent man would think it necessary to devote much time for learning the *art of Manslaughter*.

T. That may be true. But the opinion is *not* universal. Hence it becomes necessary for every nation to be always prepared for war; and it seems reasonable that every citizen should share in such necessary expenses, by devoting a part of his time to learn the use of arms.

M. Of what advantage can it possibly be to the community, for a man to learn an art which his conscience forbids him to reduce to practice. If a man verily believes that God has required him to love his enemies, and in no case to indulge the spi-

rit of revenge, by rendering evil for evil, can it be any advantage to compel such a man to spend his time in learning to handle the weapons of death? Will be not be far more useful to the community, as well as to his family, in some other employment?

T. Well—let him pay his fine, then, and say no more about it.

M. Pay his *fine!* for what? Is a man to be punished as a *criminal* for being of such a benevolent and pacific character that he does not wish to learn the art of killing his brethren? I should think that a man of such a conscience and such a disposition ought at least to be *tolerated*; and that there would be more propriety in fining men for a war spirit, than for imitating him who was meek and forgiving.

T. If I did not misapprehend some of your remarks, it is your opinion that men who can plead conscience in this affair, have a constitutional right to be exempted from military requisitions. If this be your opinion, I desire to know on what it is founded. I am a friend to liberty and to the Constitution; and if these men have a constitutional right to be exempted, so let it be. I plainly perceive that they would be of little use as soldiers.

M. You profess to be a friend to *liberty*; I would ask whether you mean to include *religious liberty*?

T. Certainly. I maintain that every man has an unquestionable right to worship and serve God according to the dictates of his own conscience, without any constraint from the government, the clergy, or any man, or body of men whatever.

M. Suppose then that the Legislature should make a law which in its operation would expose you to fine or imprisonment for non-attendance at a religious meeting, in which doctrines are constantly taught directly opposite to your opinions; what would you think of such a law?

T. I should think it oppressive and unconstitutional; I would not obey it.

M. Suppose a Catholic should say in this case, "Let him pay his fine, then, and say no more about it."

T. I should not be very well pleased. But you will admit that there is a great difference between meetings for religious purposes, and those for military trainings.

M. Yes; there must be some difference between meetings for the worship of our heavenly Father, and meetings for learning how to kill his children! But I should think there would be as much room for conscientious scruples in the latter case, as in the former; and that the laws of the state ought to be as far from exposing any man to penalties for conscientiously declining to have any thing to do with the business of war, as for neglect of conforming to the Catholic modes of worship, or those of any particular denomination.

T. I do not very well like the terms you use in expressing the object of training; there is something horrible in the idea of *learning to kill God's children—our brethren!*

M. I did not mean to misrepresent the object of such meet-

ings, or to use improper terms. When I was employed in that way myself, I really thought it to be the business of trainings, to learn to *kill men*. The horror which strikes your mind on hearing such terms, may help you to understand the scruples of conscience which some men feel in regard to employing their time in such a manner, and for such a purpose. The business itself strikes them with as much horror as the terms I used did you. The *pop* and glitter of such scenes do not conceal from *all* Christians the sanguinary object of trainings. Even on the supposition that these pacific men are in an error, still some indulgence may be pleaded for an opinion which is so harmless, and which seems naturally to grow out of that love which worketh no ill to its neighbor.

T. I have ever regarded that opinion in the Quakers as a weakness, or a species of fanaticism. But as they are generally a harmless sort of people, I thought it wise in the government to exempt them from military duty. I was not, however, prepared to expect that people of other denominations would adopt the opinion. Still, if the Constitutions of our country will tolerate the opinion, the laws should do the same. I will now hear you on that point.

M. In the Declaration of Independence it is said, "We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are *life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.*"

The Federal Constitution, in its original form, was found too indefinite on the subject of religious liberty, and in the very first "Amendment," we have these words—"Congress shall make no laws respecting the establishment of religion, *or prohibiting the free exercises thereof.*"

In the second article of "Rights," in the Constitution of this State, it is declared, that "no subject shall be hurt, molested, or restrained, in his person, liberty, or estate, for worshipping God in that manner and season most agreeable to the dictates of his own conscience;—or for his religious profession or sentiments; provided he doth not disturb the public peace, or obstruct others in their religious worship."

T. These passages appear to me to have been intended to give a free toleration to persons of different opinions in respect to *articles of faith, and modes of worship*, without any reference to *military affairs*.

M. Suppose, my good friend, this to be one article of *your religious faith*, that public war is absolutely murderous, and perfectly repugnant to the precepts and the spirit of the Messiah, through whom you hope to be saved; would it be no infringement of the "unalienable rights of *liberty*," no prohibition of the "free exercise" of your religion, no "hurt, molestation, or restraint in your person, liberty or estate," on account of your "religious profession or sentiments," to subject you to fines or imprisonments for non-attendance at trainings, or for refusing to fight in time of war?

However strange or erroneous such a sentiment may now appear to you, it is perhaps the sentiment of many thousands of intelligent and peaceable fellow citizens; and this sentiment may become your own. Your mind may yet be so impressed with the contrariety of all revenge and war to the forbearing and forgiving spirit of the Saviour, that the very thought of spending your time in learning the art of manslaughter, would fill you with horror. Consider the case as your own, and then say, whether an exemption from military requisitions would not be desirable and just? And whether there be any *possible* case in which it would be more abominable to compel men to violate their consciences, or to fine or imprison them for non-compliance with the opinions of others?

T. If the case were really my own, I suppose I should think and feel as others do, who possess the sentiment in question. Still I doubt whether the framers of our Constitutions had any respect to such cases in asserting the rights of conscience or religious liberty.

M. How was it possible that such cases could be overlooked by them, when they knew, that, during the revolutionary war, the Quakers, as a people, had exposed themselves to the most injurious treatment rather than to have any concern in shedding human blood? Besides, how came they to be exempted by our laws, if no provision was supposed to be made for it in the Constitution?

T. Do you suppose that the exemption for which you plead, properly falls under the denomination of *religious liberty*? <sup>21</sup>

M. Verily I do, in the most strict and proper sense of the terms. For it is a *religious principle* which is in question, as truly so as any possible sentiment which relates to the worship or service of Jehovah.

T. This I think is not the light in which the subject has been generally viewed.

M. Perhaps it is not. In the affairs of religion, men have been too prone to separate what God, hath joined together:—namely the love of God, and love one to another. But “this is the commandment which we have received, that he who loveth God, should love his brother also.” And we are told that “he that saith, I love God, and yet hateth his brother, is a liar.” But men have imagined that they could do both at the same time. Hence solemn forms of worship and calling on God have been associated with hatred revenge, and all the crimes of war. But when it shall be understood that “love is the fulfilling of the law,” and the sum of all true religion, it may then appear, that laws to compel men to fight, or bear arms, contrary to the dictates of their consciences, are as flagrantly unjust and intolerant as the Pagan laws for compelling Christians to offer sacrifices to idols.

T. There is a part of the tenth article of the Declaration of Rights, in the Constitution of this state, which is not very easily reconciled to an exemption of individuals from military services: “Each individual of the society, has a right to be protected by it in the enjoyment of his life, liberty and property, according to standing laws. He is obliged, consequently, to contribute his

share to the expense of such protection, to give his personal service, or an equivalent, when necessary."

M. If "each individual has a right to be protected by standing laws, in the enjoyment of his life, liberty and property," the laws should be adapted to afford such protection; and not so framed as to expose either the "life liberty, or property" of any conscientious and peaceable citizen.

T. It was the next sentence which I had more particularly in view—"He is obliged consequently to contribute his share to the expence of such protection, to give his personal service, or an equivalent when necessary."

M. No reasonable man perhaps will object to these principles; and probably no men are more willing to contribute their share of either money or services, than those who think their rights violated by military requisitions, and that these rights can be better secured by preserving peace than making war. It has been the opinion of some men that "wisdom is better than weapons of war," and that the wisdom which is from above ever dictates a pacific policy as the best protection to "life liberty and property;" and as that which secures the favour of Him with whom is the destiny of individuals, and nations. They therefore choose to contribute in money or personal services to the perservation of peace, rather than to the support of a military system. But if the article means that, in case of war, every man shall either fight or pay an equivalent, by hiring a substitute, I would ask, what can be an *equivalent to the substitute*, in the case of losing his life and soul by fighting for another? And is a Christian at liberty to hire a brother to fight for him, while he in fact believes war to be of the nature of murder?

T. There seems to be some difficulty in the questions you propose; but I conceive that the article in the Constitution has reference to trainings in time of peace, as well as fighting in time of war.

M. If the meaning be, that every man shall train or pay a fine as an equivalent, I would ask, why are so many of the community exempted from year to year, both from personal service and the fine? Not only all over 45 years of age and all under 18, but a vast number between 18 and 45 are as completely exempted as the Quakers. This is the case not only with the clergy, but with a multitude of civil characters. Their personal services are supposed not to be needed, or to be rendered in some other manner as useful to the community as handling a musket or learning to step by the fife and drum. If such a multitude who have no religious scruples on the subject, are exempted, on account of services rendered, or supposed to be rendered, in some other way, shall those who religiously believe that such military services are antichristian and unlawful for them, be harrassed and persecuted from year to year by fines or imprisonment, for obeying God rather than man?

T. I am not well pleassd with the word *persecution*, as you have applied it in the present case.

M. It is indeed an unpleasant term, nor would I have used it, could I have found a word less offensive which would have as clearly expressed the nature of that conduct to which I referred.

T. Do you then really think that it is of the nature of *persecution*, to fine and imprison men for refusing to train?

M. If their refusal results from a religious belief that such trainings are antichristian and of immoral tendency, and if this belief has been avowed, it is as real *persecution* to fine or imprison, as to burn at the stake, or to torture in any of the forms adopted by the papal inquisition. The difference is only in the degree of evil inflicted; the spirit and principle are the same.

T. But is *fanaticism* to be tolerated? and is it not fanaticism to believe in the unlawfulness of training, and learning the use of arms for self defence.

M. I will reply by asking another question—was it fanaticism in General Hamilton to believe that it would be “murderous” in him to practise, like Col. Burr, firing at a mark to prepare for the duel? The General was a man of military habits, yet he had become convinced of the immoral nature of duelling. He indeed so far complied with the opinion of duellist as to consent to fight when challenged; but his conscience would not permit him to practise shooting to prepare for the battle; because he believed such preparation to be *murderous*. Can it then be wonderful, that men who have formed different habits from the General, and who esteem it both a duty and a privilege to be followers of the Prince of Peace, should regard preparations for war and learning the *trade* of mankilling, as bordering too much on a disposition to violate the sixth commandment?

T. I had forgotten that such was the fact with General Hamilton; but I now recollect his reply, when informed that his adversary was practising to prepare for the combat. Whether his scruple of conscience arose from fanaticism or not, I think it was generally regarded as an extraordinary occurrence. Besides, public wars and private wars are different things; the former are sanctioned by the laws of our country, the latter are forbidden as wanton and murderous.

M. Permit me, sir, to observe, that these two kinds of war are not very different, either in respect to the principles which they embrace, or the spirit with which they are waged; and that public war is the more wanton, unjust and murderous of the two; for the greater portion of its evils falls on men who are compelled to fight in the quarrels of others. I may add that every citizen is as liable to private abuse, challenge or assault, as a state is to public insult or invasion. Suppose then that our Legislature should pass an “Act for the greater security of Personal Rights;” requiring that every male child, of every denomination, the Friends excepted, should be early taught the most approved methods of duelling, and that all males between the ages of 18 and 45, should spend at least four days in each year in shooting with a pistol at the figure of a man, and in learning the use of the

sword, under the tuition of experienced duellists; that on these days the pupils should familiarize the combat by sham fighting; the penalties for non-compliance the same as for non-appearance at the public trainings:—would such a law tend to improve the condition of society, or afford greater security against individual wrongs? Would not such a law rather tend to the destruction of morals, and to multiply private wrongs, combats and murders? Would it not infringe the rights of individuals? Might not men of real benevolence have conscientious scruples, whether it were their duty to comply with such a law, or to educate their children in such a manner? And might they not possess these scruples without being justly exposed to the charge of superstition, fanaticism, or cowardice? Would it be consistent with justice and the rights of conscience, to fine, imprison or punish peaceable men for non-compliance with such a law?

*T.* I perceive the bearings of your statements and inquiries. I cannot say that I should be pleased with such a law; and yet I do not see that it would be more unjust in its operation than the present military laws. It seems to be only extending the principle on which our laws are founded. Still, I suspect that our Legislature will not very readily grant the exemption which has been requested.

*M.* I cannot think they will refuse to grant it, after having duly reflected on the subject. Our legislators are but *Representatives* of the individuals of which the community is composed. Their proper business is to enact such laws as will best secure the rights of those individuals. If any law exists that is found to interfere with those rights which the Constitution declares to be "unalienable," it is the duty of the Legislature, to amend it, and let the oppressed go free. For this the Constitution has wisely provided.

*T.* One thing now occurs to my mind, which I had not heretofore considered: Our constitution says, "Every denomination of Christians, demeaning themselves peaceably, and as good subjects of the common wealth, shall be equally under the protection of the law; and no subordination of any one sect to another shall ever be established by law." But as the Friends are permitted to enjoy the rights of conscience respecting war and bearing arms, without being exposed to penalties; they appear to be a *privileged sect*, unless the same liberty is granted to others when requested. Of course, "subordination of one sect to another" is established by the existing laws of the state.

*M.* This is undeniable. But I would much prefer that this subordination should be continued, than that the Friends should be deprived of their rights, to produce an equality of privileges, or an equality of oppression. There are however other things which strike me more forcibly than this disparity of privileges among those who have adopted the same pacific principles.

*T.* To what do you allude?

*M.* According to the existing laws and customs of our country, in time of war, our citizens may become privateersmen, and in-

fest the ocean like pirates; they may murder seamen of another nation, plunder the private property of merchants, burn, sink or destroy vessels belonging to innocent people, according to their own pleasure, and thus bring distress and ruin on hundreds or thousands of unoffending families. All this they may do without being exposed to either fine or imprisonment; nay, for all this mischief, piracy and murder, they may be applauded as patriots. But just, benevolent, and peaceable citizens, who cannot, for conscience sake, have any share in distressing and destroying their fellow men, are fined, imprisoned, ridiculed and defamed; and, if poor, they may be totally ruined as to property, and their families be cast as paupers on the mercy of those by whom they have been distressed and undone. Such is the equity of our laws and customs in the *nineteenth century!* and such the laws and customs of *Christendom!*

**T.** This is truly a horrible contrast, in the existing laws and usages of our country. It is almost too bad to be named; and I doubt whether one in a hundred of our fellow citizens ever so much as thought of it.

**M.** If it be almost too bad to be *named*, is it not quite too bad to be *continued*? Were it not painful work thus to expose the inconsistency of our laws and customs, I could easily exhibit other contrasts which are perhaps equally shocking, humiliating, and disgraceful. But you will now judge for yourself who are the fanatics of our time; whether it be those who can justify privateering and all the horrors and crimes of war, or those who conscientiously expose themselves to reproach, fines and imprisonments, by refusing to go with the multitude to do what they believe to be evil.

**T.** What do you think the great Washington would have said of a law for exempting men from military services on account of their religious opinions?

**M.** I can tell you what M. Brissot has stated of the opinions of General Washington respecting the Quakers. "He declared to me, says Brissot, that in the course of the war he had an ill opinion of this society; he knew little of them, as at that time there were but few of that sect in Virginia; and he had attributed to their political sentiments the effect of their religious opinions. He told me that having since known them better, he acquired an esteem for them; and that, considering the simplicity of their manners, the purity of their morals, their exemplary economy, and their attachment to the Constitution, he considered this society as one of the best supports of the new government, which requires moderation, and a total banishment of luxury."—*Brissot's Trav.*

**T.** It would seem from this account that Washington did not regard their pacific principles as endangering the government.

**M.** True; and perhaps on due reflection you will be of the same mind. It is not from the principles and spirit of peace, but from the principles and spirit of war that the greater danger is to be apprehended.

**T.** I have not much fondness for war; I am aware that its evils

are great; and if it will not endanger our liberties, I am willing that every man should be exempted from military duty, who can honestly make the plea of conscience.

*M.* If a man should urge the plea of conscience in favour of liberty for burning his neighbor's house, or murdering his family, or promoting sedition, insurrection and havoc in society, there would be no reason for a law to tolerate such outrages; but if a man conscientiously desires to be exempted from every species of war, and from every requisition which in his opinion is inconsistent with following the Prince of Peace, I think he ought to be not only tolerated but respected. Such men will never blow the coals of strife, nor seek the overthrow of our government. They are not the materials to be wrought upon either by foreign or domestic incendiaries or demagogues who may wish to rise by creating a fire or a hurricane in our republic. Those who cordially adopt the principle, that "it is better to suffer wrong, than do wrong," are not the men by whom our government will be demolished, or the public tranquility endangered. Those who may be disposed to oppress or abuse men, on account of their pacific principles, are themselves far more dangerous members of society, notwithstanding all their boasted patriotism and their readiness to fight for liberty. Their love of country, their love of liberty, or at least their consistency, may justly be suspected, while they are disposed to trample on the rights of conscience in the case of peaceable and inoffensive brethren.

*T.* I am aware that much of the spirit of war in any community endangers the liberty and rights of individuals. But what would be our fate if a majority of our citizens should adopt the principles of the petitioners?

*M.* Our rulers would then learn to settle their controversies with other nations on the principles of peace, which would occasion a vast saving of property and blood. The more there are in any community of a peaceable character, the less is the danger both of war and insurrection; and the more there are of an opposite character, the greater is the danger, both to the community and to individuals. Instead, therefore, of oppressing and harrassing men of peace, it should be the aim of rulers to encourage them, and to increase their number. How happy it would be for our race, if they should all adopt and exemplify pacific principles! And shall a Christian Legislature discountenance principles, which if they should become universal, would fill the world with brotherly kindness, and exclude from the abodes of men the horrid crimes and ravages of war, violence and murder? This, I think, will never be done by such enlightened men as now compose the Legislature of Massachusetts.

#### DISSIMULATION.

(Continued from page 93.)

*Dissimulation* may be traced from the palace to the cottage; from the seat of science to the wilds of ignorance: discoverable in every sta-

tion, from the monarch to the peasant. Not that all are guilty of criminal indulgence in it; far otherwise; but that all may be guarded against it; since we know it has been called in as an auxiliary by every grade amongst men, to aid in the execution of their favorite plans. I admit that there are instances in which recourse to it is justifiable; the motive resulting from the sincerity of the heart, in proposing thereby the happiness of the human family; in which *self* has no other interest, than as a member of the body. This also will be estimated by the governing motive.

We may always *suspect* of insincerity or of dissimulation, when we can discover a cause for sinister motive, any way or manner in which the proposition made, is calculated to advance private interest. I would not excite unreasonable jealousy; but this would induce deliberation; and frequently prove a guard and defence against imposture; since designing men keep this as much as possible, out of sight. Many have enriched themselves by a concealment of the motive to action; and many others have been involved in difficulty by yielding to the solicitations of the designing, without sufficient deliberation.

Dissimulation, with desire to deceive for the purpose of advancing self-interest, is in every grade, a species of warfare: proportionate in magnitude, to the object proposed. War in the highest grade results from a desire to advance self-interest at the expense of other men, or other nations. In monarchal countries, every subordinate officer, while he is ready to "fight for his country," expects to draw from the treasury, and perhaps from the spoils of war. A general excitement of the irascible passions, is easily produced by this vast number of self-interested men; claiming patriotism, or public welfare as the governing principle, which actuated by sinister motives. Nor is it, in my opinion, less the case in our own country. I will simply communicate my ideas of the origin of the last war; not however promising to prove their correctness, but submit them to the reader for contemplation.

The British had impressed, and indeed, in a cruel manner, a great number of men, and had dishonored the American flag. This spread through the country, and like fire catching at all combustible substances; it excited a spirit of resentment in every bosom that was predisposed to war. I have considered, that almost every one who advocated the war, and had access to the high court of decision in cases of war and peace, either directly or indirectly; first went over the ground to see if it should be rendered subservient to self-interest. It was readily foreseen that the expenses would be great, and consequently, a liberal circulation of money, as it proved even to profusion. In the armies and navies, the way was opened for numerous commissions; these and the contractors, must be paid from the treasury; and all the produce of arms, and services at a high price. The pride of those who are proud of such things, was flattered, by anticipating the conquest of Canada; and the financiers of government, and the land speculators, expected to obtain lands from those Indian Tribes that would probably, become hostile parties in the war. I have ever believed that peace would have continued, had not these secret springs given the ascendancy to the advocates for the war: I suppose at its commencement that the real motives of those who were the most vociferous for war; in the influential classes, were disguised; and so artfully, that multitudes, unsuspecting and honest in their intentions, from not discovering it, were induced to subservience. For, if the bondage of the impressed seamen

excited so much sympathy. How was it that a moral certainty of the sacrifice of the lives of a much greater number of men in war, with all the consequent suffering; should less affect the tender sensibilities of those who raised their voices for it? Look now at the sequel. Many men accumulated large estates; about fifty millions, (the cost of the war,) mostly passed through the hands of its advocates; while a much greater number were reduced from affluence or competency, to poverty, and its consequences. The number of lives lost far exceeded that of the number released from British servitude. And these would undoubtedly have been discharged soon after; at the close of the European war. Here then is a heavy balance of lives lost, with all the sufferings attendant on war; corruption of morals beyond estimation; derangement of business, and a depression of circumstances long to be painfully remembered by many; and an immense debt to burden succeeding generations: all this and more, to be charged to those who, through dissimulation, disguised their real motives, operating upon the credulity of the unsuspecting and the unguarded. In all cases, in which dissimulation is resorted to; the honest and unsuspecting, are the easiest victims.

*Then, Americans were thought to merit the applaudits of the public, if under a commission from government, they fought and captured British vessels; the laws of God and man were thought to approve it. Now is called a pirate, although actuated by exactly the same motive, Viz, *plunder*; forfeits his life to the same government. Can the nature of crime be changed by the customs of nations? Can man delegate power to man, to grant an immunity to crime? Is not robbery, robbery still, though approved by human governments? Is not public opinion perverted by yielding without investigation, to those barbarous customs which have treated property and even lives upon the waters, as honest plunder in time of war? When will mankind act with consistency!! Custom, in points wrong in their nature, is a great deceiver; and should be watched with a jealous eye.*

I will mention a case in which dissimulation has been encouraged by the laws of several of the States; not however intentionally; but those conclusions, were probably attributable to a want of deliberate investigation, and a more intimate acquaintance with the subject. I allude to a kind of commutation laws, by which the Society of Friends were intended to be partially relieved from the difficulties in which they were involved by Military Laws; proposing a release, on payment of a part of the fines, or an annual payment, in some indirect manner. This course evidently presupposes them to be devoid of sincerity in their pretensions to conscientious objections to carnal warfare and whatever pertains to it. But I fully believe that every Legislator that will acquaint himself with their history, will be convinced not only of their sincerity, but also of their propriety in dissenting from the warlike customs of the world. They have been tried and proved, about one hundred and eighty years, in which, neither persecution, nor the coercion of civil or martial Laws have drawn or driven them from their standing. Their sincerity has been fully tested by fines and imprisonments; and has proved invincible. From their first association to the present time, they have, as a body, been enabled to maintain an unshaken confidence in the power of the ever-living and ever-present *God*, for *defence and protection*; having the lives and the precepts, the laws and the doctrines, of the "Prince of Peace"—the Redeemer himself; and of his apostles, for their authority. The un-

deviating adherence of the primitive Christians, to the principle of non-resistance and of peace, for the three first centuries, is clearly illustrative of the propriety of a total withdrawal from the spirit and practice of war. This incontrovertible evidence derived from the ancients, is abundantly confirmed by a measure of that precious feeling of soul which first lighted the world with a ray of heavenly peace. Having only room for a brief sketch of the subject, which volumes would not exhaust; I would recommend it as a duty incumbent on those who are to legislate upon the consciences of this body of men, first to make a candid, impartial, investigation. But, admitting their sincerity, and that they firmly believe it to be a duty, to their God, their Saviour and to mankind; to continue steadfast in their testimony against war; admitting this, for Legislatures to offer them incitements to violate those convictions of truth and duty, is literally *tempting them to dissemble with God*. This is not indeed limited to Legislative bodies; a great proportion of the people act upon the same principles; supposing that a friend paying his fine in some secret manner, so that the world has no knowledge of it, is excusable. He might indeed thereby avoid a dismemberment from his Society; but the approbation of those who solicited it, would but poorly compensate for the loss of that precious serenity of soul, which accompanies faithfulness in the testimony against war. May we not conclude that those who suppose that others *cannot* be governed by the spirit and precepts of the gospel, are not themselves governed by them; and, that those who would induce others, to violate their consciences, have none of their own to violate?

Let not, that vital spark, that hallowed flame, first lighted in the soul by a ray of heavenly love, be extinguished by the breath of its adversaries. Let it shine as a "candle upon its candlestick," giving light to all around, that beholders seeing its beauty and loveliness, may be excited to a participation in its enjoyments. The gospel dispensation, is a dispensation of peace; having only to combat the adversaries of the soul; too powerful indeed for the strength of Man. It proposes, and there is known to exist, a covenant between God the Father, and the soul of every true Christian; through the mediation of the Blessed Saviour, and through the medium of the Holy Spirit. God has promised faithfulness on his part; the Christian does not distrust it. In seasons when Divine condescension is evidently manifested, when "the love of God is shed abroad," producing a reciprocity of feeling and desires; in the time of trial and deep exercise; the soul (secretly as to human view,) covenants to be faithful to all the clear manifestations of Truth and duty, under a full belief that any deviation would expose to a state of desertion by this Blessed Principle. Neither is it in the power of *men or devils* to disannul this covenant, while the soul continues its fidelity, and its supreme attachment to it, as the only source of access to God, and the only hope of salvation. Very different indeed from covenants, made with men, who can only "judge according to outward appearances," and who are therefore very liable to deceptions. But it is the most futile of all ideas, to attempt to dissemble with God, "*who looketh on the heart.*"

The advice of the Apostle Paul, appropriate to this dissertation, may be quoted with propriety at its close. It is both instructive and impressive; in sentiment and feeling, expressive of my own; and I wish it rendered familiar to every individual. (Ephesians.)

Finally my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his

might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. And therefore having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the *sword of the spirit*, which is the *Word of God.*"

JUSTIN.

FROM THE FRIEND OF PEACE.

*Feelings of regular troops engaged in battle.*

**The following is the testimony of a British officer:—**

"When the battle has fairly begun, I may say with truth, that the feelings of those engaged are delightful, because they are, in fact, so many gamblers, playing for the highest stake that could be offered.—The warlike appearance of every thing about you, the careless faces and rude jokes of the private soldiers, and something within yourself, which I can compare to nothing more than the mirth which criminals are said sometimes to experience and express previous to their execution; all these combine to give you a degree of false hilarity, I had almost said, painful, from its very excess. It is an agitation of the nerves, such as we may suppose madmen feel, which you are inclined to wish removed, though you are unwilling to admit that it is disagreeable."

*Narrative of the Campaigns of the British Army at Washington and New Orleans.*

It is a striking fact, that in writing *Paradise Lost*, Milton derived his ideas of devils or *apostate spirits*, from the well known character of warriors. To his devils the poet ascribes the same impious disregard to the commands of God, the same love of martial glory, the same stratagems, the same courage, the same mirth and disposition to indulge in "rude jokes," and the same madness, which are to be found in regular troops when engaged in the work of slaughter and constantly exposed to instant death.

But how shocking to the reflecting christian must be the thought, that millions of his brethren are so trained up, so inured to bloody deeds, that, "when fairly engaged," in *killing one another*, their "feelings are delightful!" that they can appear with "careless faces," and indulge in "rude jokes," while hundreds are falling dead around them, hundreds more rending the air with cries and groans,—and even while balls are swiftly approaching to hurry their own souls to the bar of a righteous God!

Whence could Milton have borrowed a more correct or more awful description of the depravity of devils? Unless indeed he had substituted the character of warmaking rulers, who glory in causing their subjects to be thus educated, employed, and ruined!

The first reason assigned by this officer, why "the feelings of those engaged are delightful," is worthy of special notice. "Because," he says, "there are in fact so many gamblers, playing for the highest stake that could be offered." A dreadful species of *play!* a horrid mode of *gambling!* Is it not time for all christians, and all men of sense, to unite their exertions, to bring such gambling into universal disrepute?

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## SUPPLEMENTORY TO NO. IX. VOLUME I.

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It has become necessary to give another small supplement. This will be done as often as the patronage will afford. The number of subscribers would count pretty respectably, but in order to diffuse, as widely as possible, the principle intended to be promoted, I have circulated a considerable number gratuitously. This diminishes the ability to issue extra sheets, or parts of sheets, so often as I otherwise would do.

It will be observed that a part of the last impression was taken off on coarser paper than I have used heretofore. This was not from choice. It was in consequence of there being none of the quality heretofore used, at the paper mill, from which I obtain my supplies.

The article from my correspondent "Justin" has given me some uneasiness, from an apprehension that there may be some errors affecting the views of the writer. There were a number of enterlineations, with a lead pencil, which were visible when the article reached this office, but not legible.

There are also some typographical errors, detected since the number was struck off. Several of these do not affect the sense, but there are others that do.

In page 150, in the first line, the *period* should only be a *comma*.

line 22 and 23, for *Now* is, read *Now one is.*

The Editor was compelled to leave his office just as the last half of the 9th number went to the press, which is his apology for these errors.

A very extraordinary irregularity prevails in the mails, as relates to the conveyance of the Moral Advocate. Being in the habit of making up the different packages *myself*, I know that the failures complained of, are not attributable to omissions here.

A respectable friend in Baltimore, to whom the Moral Advocate has been regularly sent from the commencement, informs me that he has only received the first and eighth numbers !!

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The article from the Richmond Enquirer; inserted in the 9th number, requires some few comments.

In page 139 the writer remarks that in his "county, after the jail had been filled according to law, the door was by some means left open on the first night, and with much difficulty the prisoners were persuaded to walk out, and return to their homes." I was myself at that time a citizen of Virginia, & I recollect the circumstance to which I suppose the writer alludes. But he ought also to be informed that the *society* considered the conduct of those who thus "walked out," as highly censurable, and totally incompatible with the dignity of the cause for which they were imprisoned. Like the Apostle, when they have been Pub-

licly condemned, they have not been willing to be privately or clandestinely released. They need neither locks, nor chains, nor guards to keep them in custody; nor do they avoid suffering, by indirect or dishonorable means.

In the same page, and near the conclusion of the essay, he suggests a commutation, or else a blending of military fines with the taxes for civil purposes, in such a manner that they cannot be easily separated. This expedient would be as ineffectual as any that have already been tried. It is really surprising that many persons of extensive information and of feelings altogether friendly to the relief of the society, should not see that evasions and indirect compliances, cannot be accepted. If the military fines were so blended with the other taxes as to render a separation *impossible*, the consequence would be, that the whole would be refused, and if collected at all, it would of necessity be by distraint. Nor would the application of the fine to benevolent purposes make it any better. If my neighbor demand a sum of money of me as a debt, I do not enquire how he intends to apply it, but, on what grounds it is demanded. And if I cannot admit the justice of the claim, it would argue some defect in my character to suppose that I would consent to pay it in an indirect manner. Shall I tell him that his demand is totally unjust, and that I cannot consent to pay it, but if he will disguise it in some way, or blend it with some other account that is just, I will then pay it without hesitation? It is true that if I acted for another—if I knew that my employer would not admit the claim in its real character, I might, if I chose to attempt an imposition, concert measures with the claimant, by which the demand might assume a shape in which it could pass without detection. But it would evidently be an act of meanness—a violation of principle. A procedure that no honest man could approve. But in the case before us, whom should we attempt to deceive? would it be our consciences, or our God?

The subject is clothed with a dignity, that precludes all idea of perversion. We are bound by religious obligation. We are accountable to God. And therefore we maintain the ground we have taken. We plead the cause of humanity,—and not of humanity simply—but we advocate the doctrines of Jesus Christ. In this contest we do not place our dependence in physical force. We appeal to the consciences of those in power, but we commit our cause to Him, to whom Rulers themselves are accountable.

But to obtain relief from suffering is not our primary object. It is to promote the propagation of the religion of Jesus Christ; the leading characters of which still are “Glory to God in the highest: on Earth, peace, good will towards men”. These are the objects we have in view, and for these we are even willing still further to suffer, if the laws of

our country demand it. But let it be remembered that these laws are made and enforced by our fellow citizens—our neighbours—men who acknowledge themselves, equally with us, bound by the precepts of the Gospel—and equally accountable to God.

### From the Friend of Peace.

#### A SCALE FOR ESTIMATING THE PROBABILITIES OF WAR.

NATIONS are great families of mankind, and small families are nations in miniature. By due attention to the circumstances which render hostilities between two individuals or two families more or less probable, we may obtain a clear view of what is necessary to diminish the probabilities of war between two nations, and to exclude sanguinary contests from the world. For this purpose three cases will be stated.

*First.* In one neighborhood are two families; the head of each is a warrior or duellist, in principle and spirit. The children and servants of both families are imbued with the haughty, vindictive principles of war and duelling, and with the love of fighting glory. Several days are annually employed by each family in learning the art of *mankilling*, as the best means of preserving peace, honor, and life.

*Second.* In another neighborhood are two families of opposite characters and principles. At the head of one is a genuine duellist; the head of the other is a genuine friend of peace. The children of each family are educated according to the sentiments and spirit of the father.

*Third.* Another neighborhood is composed of two families, both of which are under the dominion of pacific principles and the spirit of the Messiah. Instead of learning the science of human slaughter, or relying on weapons of death, they place their hope in God, study the art of preserving peace, and practise doing good to each other.

Suppose these three neighborhoods to be remote from each other, and independent of civil government. In which neighborhood are the probabilities of insult, violence and hostilities the greatest?

In the first, the probabilities of war are manifestly great. The spirit mutually cherished, the principles avowed and inculcated, and the means employed in learning to fight, all tend to produce jealousies, envyings, hatreds and hostilities. Indeed it is so common for duellists to fight one another, that news of such an occurrence occasions but little surprise.

In the second neighborhood, half the probabilities of war are at once cancelled by the consideration that all the principles and dispositions for war are on one side only. Another portion is cancelled by the consideration that the other family will not act on the principle of *revenge* when injured—not render evil for evil, but will adopt means to appease the unreasonable anger of the injurious neighbor. We may add, that the probabilities of war are still further diminished by the sense of *honor* or *shame* on the part of the duellist himself. For though duellist often insult, abuse,

and even kill one another, it is not common for them thus to treat good and peaceable men. All who have any claim to be considered as men of honor would be ashamed of such conduct.

In the third neighborhood, differences of opinion may arise, and some grounds of complaint may occur, but these things will be managed on such principles and with such a spirit, as will exclude even the possibilities of a bloody contest.

On the same principles the probabilities of war between two nations are greater or less according to the characters of the men who govern. If in both nations the rulers are of a haughty, fighting character, fond of military glory, war is *highly probable*. If the rulers of one of the nations are of the war character and those of the other are truly men of peace, the latter circumstance renders open war *very improbable*. But if the rulers of both nations are wise, good, and pacific men, war between the two nations is *impossible*, so long as these men shall govern their respective subjects. In such a case there may indeed be occasional injuries and bickerings, arising from the injustice, avarice, or passion of subjects, while the rulers are good men; but such injuries and private animosities will be disapproved by the governments, and suppressed without an appeal to national hostilities.

How awful then the responsibility attached to high official stations! How shocking the account of bloodshed which lies against a great part of the rulers of nations in past ages and in the present age! and how important to the people of every country, that their rulers should be men of intelligence, integrity and pacific principles—men who know that wisdom's "ways are ways of pleasantness," and that "*ALL her paths are peace!*"

#### OHIO PENITENTIARY.

The number of convicts confined in the penitentiary, on the first of January last, was 119—of whom 96 were sentenced from 3 to 7 years; 12 from 7 to 14 years; 8 from 14 to 21 years; and two for life. This establishment, under its present arrangement, and under its new officers, will be more efficient as a place of punishment and of reform, than it has heretofore been; whilst its annual expense to the state will be considerably reduced. The prisoners are to be fed upon the coarsest food, and to be allowed no privilege or comfort whatever, except such as may be indispensably necessary for the preservation of their health—solitary confinement is to be introduced, and the prisoners not permitted to hold correspondence with any person whatever, unless as a reward for good conduct. Labor is not, however, to be suspended; but such articles only are to be fabricated, as may meet with a demand, and the cost of the raw materials for which shall bear but a small proportion to the amount of labor. Our penitentiary will not, hereafter, we are convinced, be looked upon by the vicious and the guilty, as a place of repose after their labors, but will be a terror and a punishment to them. Such it ought always to have been, and would have been had not a mistaken sense of humanity preponderated over a just regard to the interests and safety of the community at large.

W. Herald.